

24450—Continued.

a handsome tree, with dark-green, shining leaves which have a resinous odor; it is common in the greater part of India, growing up to 4,000 feet; when cultivated is a middle-sized tree of 35 feet, but when wild is a scrubby tree.

"The leaves, roots, bark, and fruit are used in native medicines and the last named in European medicines also, and from the flowers a scent water is distilled.

"Bael is cultivated for its fruits and as a sacred tree, being thought a lot of for worship of the god Shiva, and is one of the few woods prescribed by the Hindoo scriptures for sacrificial fires. The wood is close grained, tough, and strong, but often splits in seasoning.

"The leaves, bark, and roots are used as a febrifuge and the first mentioned is also lopped for cattle fodder.

"The unripe fruit, either boiled or roasted, is used as a specific for diarrhea and dysentery. When ripe it is very much like an orange in shape, color, and size, but has a hard shell, which is sometimes made into snuffboxes; the pulp of the fruit is a laxative and when mixed with milk or soda water, or both, makes a healthy, cooling, and agreeable sherbet. To make this they take the pulp of the fruit out of the shell and put it into a little water, then pass it through a strainer, and put it into a glass of milk or soda water and sugar to taste. The pulp is also used to strengthen mortar for building purposes and the mucus with which the cells are filled is used as a glue; also used with water paints to add to their strength and brilliancy. This fruit is greatly valued for eating by the natives, but can scarcely be looked upon as palatable to the white man except as a sherbet and for its medicinal properties. The tree comes true to seed and is not grafted. It might be tried in several districts, as it grows equally as well up here as in Calcutta, where the air is moist and hot all the year round, and here it is very dry and hot in the summer, with a temperature of 112° to 120° F. in the shade, and in the winter with sometimes 12 degrees of frost at night; but the bael always looks healthy and green, no matter what the weather is. It is leafless for about one month only, January or February, and its one year's fruit is ripe at about the same time that it is flowering for the next year's fruit.

"This is really a valuable tree both from a decorative and economic point of view, and I do not consider it gets the attention in India that it should." (*Mustoe.*) For further description and previous importation, see No. 22957.

Introduced at Mr. Walter T. Swingle's suggestion for use in breeding new types of citrus fruits.

24451 to 24575.

From northern and central Asia. Received through Prof. N. E. Hansen, of the Agricultural Experiment Station, Brookings, S. Dak., while traveling as an agricultural explorer for the Department of Agriculture, December 3, 1908.

The following seeds:

24451. MEDICAGO RUTHENICA (L.) Trautv.

"(No. 59.) From same source as No. 58 (S. P. I. No. 24456). This is a favorite wild forage for the stock kept by the Mongolian nomads of this region, should be tested in the driest, coldest parts of the Northwest, especially where the most extreme cold comes at times without snow on the ground. For a common name Gobi Desert, Mongolian, or East Siberian alfalfa will do." (*Hansen.*)

Distribution.—A native of stony and sandy regions of Siberia, extending east to the region of Lake Baikal, and into China.